



MINUTES
OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING / PUBLIC HEARINGS
FY2021-2022 BUDGET ORDINANCES
Tuesday, June 22, 2021
6:00 P.M.

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. John Elliott, Chairman, District I
Mr. Paul Cain, Vice Chair, District III
Mr. Julian Davis III, Chairman Pro Tem, District IV
Mr. Glenn Hart, District V
Mr. Matthew Durham, District II

Oconee County Council met at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members, County Administrator Amanda F. Brock, County Attorney David Root, and Katie D. Smith, Clerk to Council, present.

Press: Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [www.oconeesc.com/council]. In addition, it was made available [*upon request*] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Members of the press present: Riley Morningstar / Daily Journal & Dick Mangrum / 101.7 FM WGOG

Call to Order:

Mr. Elliott called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Elliott opened the meeting reminding the public they have two opportunities to speak during Council meetings, which is during the public comment session and also during the public hearing session, if scheduled. Other than those two instances, the public should remain silent during the Council meeting. Anyone making a disturbance during the meeting will be asked to leave Council Chambers for the remainder of the meeting.

Mr. Root noted there were three public hearings and these are for the public to be heard and is not an interactive process. He further noted that during the discussion session, Council can address questions that were brought up.

Mr. Durham made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to amend the agenda to include a moment of silence, prayer, and Pledge of Allegiance, in this order, as the first three agenda items immediately prior to the opening of public hearings.

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Moment of Silence

Mr. Elliott asked for a moment of silence prior to the Invocation by County Council Chaplain.

Invocation by County Council Chaplain

Mr. Root, County Council Chaplain, gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Durham led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Public Hearings for the Following Ordinances

If you would like to be heard during either of the public hearings, please contact Clerk to Council Katie Smith at ksmith@oconeesc.com or 864-718-1023 so that she may coordinate your participation by telephone.

Ordinance 2021-01 “AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR **OCONEE COUNTY** AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR ORDINARY COUNTY PURPOSES, FOR THE TRI-COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE EMERGENCY SERVICES PROTECTION SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE ROAD MAINTENANCE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE BRIDGE AND CULVERT CAPITAL PROJECT FUND, FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL PROJECT FUND, FOR THE PARKS, RECREATION, AND TOURISM CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND, FOR THE DEBT SERVICE FUND, FOR THE VICTIM SERVICES SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS, FOR THE CAPITAL VEHICLE / EQUIPMENT FUND, ALL IN OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2021 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2022.”

General Government matter

Mr. Elliott opened the floor for Public Comment.

Mr. John Wendorf addressed Council in opposition of **Ordinance 2021-01** and also addressed his concerns regarding this ordinance.

Mr. Luke Moore addressed Council regarding the omission of the moment of silence, prayer, and Pledge of Allegiance on the agenda and placement of these items on future agendas.

Ms. Gail Reebenacker addressed Council in opposition of **Ordinance 2021-01** and also addressed her concerns regarding this ordinance.

Ms. Karen Powell addressed Council in opposition of **Ordinance 2021-01** and also addressed her concerns regarding this ordinance.

Mr. Karl Reebenacker addressed Council in opposition of **Ordinance 2021-01** and also addressed his concerns regarding this ordinance.

Mr. Mickey Haney addressed Council utilizing a handout [copy filed with backup materials] in opposition of **Ordinance 2021-01** and also addressed his concerns regarding this ordinance.

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An email was received by Mr. Durham [copy filed with backup materials] and he read this comment into the record regarding **Ordinance 2021-01**. No name was provided.

Noting that no other citizens signed up to address Council, Mr. Elliott opened the floor for any citizen wishing to address Council regarding this ordinance. No citizen addressed Council.

Mr. Elliott asked if any citizens wished to submit written comments regarding this ordinance; no citizen presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Elliott closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2021-01**.

Ordinance 2021-02 “AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR THE **SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY** (the “School District”) AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR THE OPERATIONS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2021 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2022.”

General Government matter

Mr. Elliott opened the floor for Public Comment.

Noting that no citizens signed up to address Council; Mr. Elliott opened the floor for any citizen wishing to address Council regarding this ordinance.

Mr. Elliott asked if any citizens wished to submit written comments regarding this ordinance; no citizen presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Elliott closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2021-02**.

Ordinance 2021-03 “AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR THE **KEOWEE FIRE SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT** AND TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR THE KEOWEE FIRE SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2021 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2022.”

General Government matter

Mr. Elliott opened the floor for Public Comment.

Noting that no citizens signed up to address Council; Mr. Elliott opened the floor for any citizen wishing to address Council regarding this ordinance.

Mr. Elliott asked if any citizens wished to submit written comments regarding this ordinance; no citizen presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Elliott closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2021-03**.

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Mr. Elliott noted as a matter of clarification and instruction, that moving forward, for the County Attorney and the Clerk to Council to correct the unintentional omission of the prayer, Pledge of Allegiance, and moment of silence.

Third Reading of the Following Ordinances

Ordinance 2021-01 [see caption above]

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, to approve **Ordinance 2021-01** on third & final reading.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 5 – 0, to amend Ordinance 2021-01 to eliminate the second Code Enforcement Officer position in the Planning Department which constitutes a reduction of \$53,278 and the Real Estate Property Tax revenues be reduced by \$53,278 to reflect the elimination of that provision.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to remove the Communication Specialist position from the Administration Department and transfer the amount previously approved for that position up to \$58,111 to the Administration Department's professional line item to create a comprehensive communications plan.

Discussion between Council members regarding the communications plan continued to include how to communicate both internally between departments and as with the public, one-time expenditure, plan would be implemented by Administration staff, and use the funds that were allocated to create the feasibility study for the swamp rabbit trail instead of using the above amount.

Regarding the previous motion made by Mr. Cain, seconded by Mr. Davis, it was approved 3 – 2 [Mr. Hart & Mr. Durham opposed] to remove the Communication Specialist position from the Administration Department and transfer the amount previously approved for that position up to \$58,111 to the Administration Department's professional line item to create a comprehensive communications plan.

Per Mr. Elliott, Ms. Brock addressed the public and answered questions citizens had regarding the budget. Among other things, Ms. Brock explained the expenditures, line by line items, check registers, financial transparency page, encumber funds for purchase orders, balanced budget, airport line items, additional positions, and asset sheets.

Mr. Root noted for a parliamentary point of order, the Chairman or the majority of Council can specifically call on someone from the public to help with deliberations. He noted staff or Council cannot create an open forum.

Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Durham, to abolish the budget and go back to FY2019-2020.

Lengthy discussion between all Council members continued. Council members allowed Ms. Joset Holcomb, Mr. Mickey Haney, Mr. Tony Adams, and Mr. Grant Keehn to come forward and continue to address Council and the public to help with deliberations and assist Council with their decisions regarding the

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budget.

Regarding the previous motion made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. Durham, the motion **failed** 2 – 3 [Mr. Davis, Mr. Cain, & Mr. Elliott opposed].

Mr. Elliott called for the vote on **Ordinance 2021-01** as amended by the two previous motions as carried from Mr. Cain. The motion passed, 3 – 2 [Mr. Hart & Mr. Durham opposed].

Ordinance 2021-02 *[see caption above]*

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 5 – 0, to approve **Ordinance 2021-02** on third & final reading.

Ordinance 2021-03 *[see caption above]*

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 5 – 0, to approve **Ordinance 2021-03** on third & final reading.

Adjourn:

Mr. Hart made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Katie D. Smith
Clerk to Council

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